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MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

February 20, 1973

PARTICIPANTS:

H. E. Mr. Kurt Waldheim
Secretary General of the United Nations

Ambassador John Scali
Permanent Representative of the
United States to the United Nations

Ambassador Christopher Phillips
Deputy Permanent Representative of the
United States to the United Nations

Com: 10:54G
SUBJECT: UNROLE, US FIN SUPPORT OF UN, SYG + VIETNAM Conf, UN + Aid
DATE: February 20, 1973 *to VIETNAM, UN Deficit + Bus*
Assurances

During the discussion which followed Ambassador Scali's presentation of his credentials the Secretary General touched on the following matters.

1. Opportunities for the United Nations in the Wake of Recent Bilateral Agreements

Stressing that he was a realist and understood the vital importance of accommodation between the great powers, the Secretary General believed that bilateral negotiations should not be to the exclusion of political cooperation within a multi-lateral framework. In this connection, he did not conceive of the United Nations as providing only a framework for international cooperation on economic and social activities. The fundamental purpose of the United Nations was to maintain peace and security and this must continue to be the primary objective of the Organization,

Ambassador Scali commented that the new spirit of detente generated by successful U. S. bilateral initiatives had created a more fluid situation in the world and this, in turn, opened up new opportunities for the United Nations. It would be his goal to help the United Nations achieve more visible successes, thus enhancing the Organization's prestige and contributing to increased American support for the United Nations. He assured the Secretary General that President Nixon was firmly committed to the United Nations. While recognizing the importance of recent bilateral successes, the President appreciated the value of the UN in providing an international framework for institutionalizing peace agreements and for mobilizing world support behind them.

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2. United States Financial Support for the United Nations

The Secretary General felt that the General Assembly's decision to support a reduction in the U. S. assessment to 25 per cent was a reflection of a more realistic attitude by most Member States towards the Organization. He very much hoped that the United States, now that it had achieved its 25 per cent goal, would take steps to increase its contributions to the voluntary programs, especially UNDP. In this connection, he expressed warm appreciation for U. S. support of the UN narcotics control programs and for the one million dollar additional contribution he had just received for the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control.

Commenting on the UN deficit problem, the Secretary General took some encouragement from the increasing number of voluntary contributions which have been made or pledged by Member States toward debt reduction. During his recent visit to Japan he had received assurances of a voluntary contribution of \$10 million towards debt reduction. He cautioned that for domestic political reasons the Japanese had asked him not to reveal this information at the present time. The Japanese have also pledged \$50 million towards a UN program for Vietnamese relief and rehabilitation. This information also was to be kept confidential for the time being.

The Secretary General expressed his satisfaction over assurances he had received from Ambassador Bush that should the Soviet Union agree to make a substantial voluntary payment towards debt reduction, the Administration would seek Congressional approval to write off some \$16 million owed to the United States by the United Nations. He said he had passed this information on to Ambassador Malik but to date had received no response from the Soviet Government.

The Secretary General noted that by maintaining a policy of financial austerity last year he had achieved savings of \$4 million which had been "put on the shelf". He intended to continue this policy during the current year despite efforts by some Members to apply such savings towards a reduction of Members' assessments.

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